

functional elements is effected exclusively by means of the hydraulic cylinder 22. The directions of rotation or movement of the rollers and belts 11 are indicated in the drawing by means of the arrows P.

In the Claims

Please cancel claims 2, 7, 14, and 17. Please amend claims 1, 3-6, 8-13, 15 and 16 as follows:

a2 1. (Amended) In a round baler for baling harvested crops and having a baling chamber surrounded by a two-part housing of which a front part is rigidly connected to a frame of the baler while a rear part is in the form of a pivotal tailgate, the improvement comprising an actuating mechanism having a plurality of belts and rollers disposed adjacent one another within the baling chamber for enabling baling chamber size to vary when pivoted, and a tensioning arm provided with guide rollers and a pivotal arm, wherein the tensioning arm is pivotally mounted on the frame of the baler via a hydraulic cylinder arranged between the pivotal arm and a first arm of a bell crank, wherein the first end of a bell crank is pivotally mounted on a side wall of the baler's tailgate, and wherein a second arm of the bell crank is operatively engageable with a latching mechanism on a frontal part of the housing and resilient means for increasing a latching force on the latching mechanism as a bale in the baling chamber increases in size.

a3 3. (Amended) A round baler according to Claim 1, wherein the actuating mechanism includes a plurality of mutually interlinked belts.

4. (Amended) A round baler according to Claim 1, wherein a fixed stop is arranged on the tailgate below the second arm of the bell crank.

5. (Amended) A round baler according to Claim 1, wherein the means for increasing a latching force on the latching mechanism includes a tension spring arranged between the pivotal arm and a fixed mounting point on the frame of the baler.

6. (Amended) In a round baler for baling harvested crops and having a baling chamber surrounded by a two-part housing of which a front part is rigidly connected to a frame of the baler while a rear part is in the form of a pivotal tailgate, the improvement comprising an actuating mechanism having a plurality of circulating flat-type belts and pressure rollers disposed adjacent one another within a peripheral region of the baling chamber for enabling baling chamber size to vary when pivoted, and a tensioning arm provided with guide rollers and a pivotal arm, wherein the tensioning arm is pivotally mounted on the frame of the baler via a hydraulic cylinder arranged between the pivotal arm and a first arm of a bell crank, wherein the first end of the bell crank is pivotally mounted on a side wall of the baler's tailgate, and wherein a second arm of the bell crank is connected to a latch which is engageable with a keeper disposed on the frontal part of the housing and resilient means for increasing a latching force on the keeper as a bale in the baling chamber increases in size.

8. (Amended) A round baler according to Claim 6, wherein the actuating mechanism includes a plurality of mutually interlinked belts.

9. (Amended) A round baler according to Claim 6, wherein a fixed stop is arranged on the tailgate below the second arm of the bell crank.

10. (Amended) A round baler according to Claim 6, wherein the means for increasing a latching force on the latching mechanism includes a tension spring arranged between the pivotal arm and a fixed mounting point on the frame of the baler.

11. (Amended) A method for baling harvested crops utilizing a round baler having a baling chamber surrounded by a two-part housing of which a front part is rigidly connected to a frame of the baler while a rear part is in the form of a pivotal tailgate, the method comprising:

pivoting an actuating mechanism having a plurality of belts and rollers disposed adjacent to one another within the baling chamber to vary baling chamber size;

pivotally mounting a tensioning arm, having guide rollers and a pivotal arm, on the frame of the baler via a hydraulic cylinder arranged between the pivotal arm and a first arm of a bell crank;

interconnecting a latch with a second arm of the bell crank;

engaging a pawl with the latch to lock the two-part housing; and

increasing the force on the pawl as the size of the bale increases.

12. (Amended) The method according to Claim 11, including the steps of: pivotally mounting the first arm of a bell crank on a side wall of the baler's tailgate; and

selectively engaging a second arm of the bell crank with a frontal part of the housing.

13. (Amended) The method according to Claim 11, including providing a plurality of mutually interlinked belts to form part of the actuating mechanism.

15. (Amended) The method according to Claim 11, including arranging a fixed stop below the second arm of the bell crank.

16. (Amended) The method according to Claim 11, including arranging a tension spring between the pivotal arm and a fixed mounting point on the frame of the baler for increasing the force on the pawl as the size of the bale increases.